CPS HR CONSULTING

City of Fargo

Employee Engagement Survey Comments

Fargo Cass Public Health

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What is one thing you would recommend to make your Department a better place to work?

1. Take our comments, things we report seriously. Sometimes it feels like we voice our concerns and they listen, but ultimately they make they're own decisions anyway.
2. Getting ongoing input from employees that actually do the work in the community and trust what they say.
3. open communication with a complete change in leadership
4. More consistency in tasks, more communication on expectations. More hours to get tasks done on time.
5. Better communication with staff
6. better communication. stronger leadership team that works better together. When they don't respect each other it makes it a negative/difficult culture to be in. value their employees. collaboration.
7. A peer support group
8. I would like to see FCPH portrayed more positively in local media. Highlight what we are doing.
9. More training and written procedures with clarity and consistency for staff and leadership. Direct communication as much as possible with constructive conversations/ feedback to decrease enmeshment and tense dynamics. Possibly integrating HR in a nonthreatening manner for support and objectivity before situations occur/ worsen.
10. The director of the agency I work in needs to develop an understand of what the mission of our programming is. We should be hiring into this role, a person who understands what we do and sees the people who work here as actual people with valuable skills that have a real commitment to our community and the people we serve; not just dollars and cents.
11. Support and trauma-informed care for employees. We are traumatized from the job, care about us more, and the things we have to experience that are not normal.
12. More staff team-building activities.
13. Offer a work from home, or remote option.
14. I would like Leadership to listen to ideas from employees before making decisions. I feel like changes can take time and need a plan developed. Be open to employee's ideas and challenges they are presenting to new ideas. It doesn't mean we are against the new idea but being open and realistic of the challenges it may provide. It is great to have new ideas, however when the focus/emphasis has been on efficiency and decreasing budget, some of the new ideas don't make

financial sense for certain positions- time/salary spent on new ideas and taking away from current activities the employee is doing that make a known difference. Example: new idea- only see less than 6 clients vs current day- 10-12 clients. Being able to openly talk about return on investment and how we are valued in our time and resources. Maybe we have a better idea that will help our community members to reach the same goal.

15. positively
16. Better divisional management
17. We have become very driven by money and not as much by the care of an individual.
18. More opportunities for growth and leadership
19. less micromanagement. increasing autonomy and treating staff as professionals. department has taken on a very controlled feeling/environment.
20. Reliable and adequate funding
21. Workload has increased significantly as we are unable to hire enough staff due to budgetary constraints. With increased workload, comes less job satisfaction; and more stress with completing tasks assigned and meeting managerial expectations.
22. I do not have recommendations to help the department I work in. I am satisfied with how the department runs.
23. Fire HR, Fire the Director who is ripping apart Public Health
24. The pay between staff and supervisors is very close, and not being paid for the on-call weekend does make it difficult especially over holidays. The hiring process is very long for new staff!
25. More one on one trainings
26. Hiring a Director of Public Health who has experience in Public Health or one who at least values the opinions of experienced employees. Our current Director prefers to make decisions based solely on numbers rather than outcomes. Increasing efficiency (workload and quotas) will eventually decrease our ability to Prevent, Promote and Protect.
27. Improved understanding of the work of each area. More effort in diversifying the workforce.
28. I feel that communication is one really important aspect that can always be improved upon even though our Supervisors do a pretty good job with it.
29. If the department is FCPH as a whole- a new director is a start. Someone who has a background and knowledge in public health and doesn't only care about budget cuts and making a profit. Someone who understands that public health isn't about making revenue. Someone who doesn't lie about budget cuts. Someone who listens and takes in the opinions of the employees who do the work every day.
30. ongoing collaboration

31. Overall recognition that all programming is important and one division/program is not more important/impactful than another. It's not a competition.
32. It would help a LOT if the management team was not constantly talking negatively about the Director of PH. They share things with us employees to help keep us "in the know," but it really has caused a lot of discord and negativity within PH.
33. Transparent communication.
34. Less focus on generating revenue and more focus on quality of services provided to residents of the community.
35. that management treat each other fairly & not talk down to employees, that [redacted] treat all guests with respect, and not to treat the ones [redacted] does not like different from the guests [redacted] likes. It really bothers me that [redacted] does this.
36. Listen to employees complaints about workloads and stress. And listen to our requests to end mandatory safety protocols that take up even more of our time. Our workloads are being pushed to the max and it is very difficult.
37. Dismiss the Director of [redacted], or at minimum, initiate an independent investigation into [redacted] conduct.
38. Equitable Wages.
39. Focus and emphasis on accurate training
40. I went to change pension to 401k for better benefits
41. It's simple. Kindness. Also, every single employee here is in fear of retaliation. No one speaks up due to fear. It all starts with Upper Management and Supervisors.
42. Continued connection within department.
43. Bring in more tests Need more instruments Frequent conferences More fun activities More Decors TV screen in phlebotomy room Portable fan in phlebotomy room
44. Having greater flexibility to work from home and access to quieter workspaces instead of a shared open office would improve productivity and overall job satisfaction.
45. More transparency about decisions that are being made, not only for my division but for the department as a whole. It would be nice to know about changes in staffing, new initiatives, budget struggles and strains, etc. I often feel left out regarding big picture things that are happening in my department and the city as a whole. I often find out about things through the media, which can be shocking as an employee.
46. At this time, I feel the department in which I work is well-led. Although unrealistic, being able to put all of the budget talk to bed would be good for morale. Otherwise, I am unable to think of anything at this time.

47. Fix: No accountability for managers (also get rid of the middle managers), unrealistic work load expectations. Communication about what is happening in the departments is poor, because no one has time to convey it. Doing good work gets you an increased work load until you are crippled by it. We have a manager here responsible for multiple employees leaving and that is just fine according to HR.
48. Our department overall works very well together as a team. I think the key to continued success is to keep open communication and remember we are all on the same team. In the end, we all want what is best for the clients we serve.
49. Job Security.
50. Resume the focus of our work to our mission, not to money. Public Health is not designed to be a profit center, it catches people that fall through the cracks to the betterment of society. Current leadership is not adhering to our mission.
51. be consistant with things
52. Staff retention is important as morale always is hindered when people leave.
53. N/A. The department itself is great.
54. Accountability for the higher ups. Communication enhancement.
55. Hold leadership accountable for their actions/lack of actions, less laziness from leadership.
56. A system that recognizes and rewards accomplishments and completion of duties.
57. A way to anonymously evaluate all of our managers or leadership. Management is not evaluated by the employees they manage. No safe way to give feedback.
58. Place a greater emphasis on supporting staff and understanding departmental roles, with less focus on budget and cutting expenses/staff. Staff and budget reductions have left departments stressed out and wondering if they are next. Morale is at a very low point. There is pressure to apply for grants and do more when already stretched thin with current workload. Opinions are asked for on initiatives but do not appear to be given weight nor taken into consideration.
59. To hire a different Public Health Director who cares about people, the mission, and values. Since hiring [redacted] [redacted] in 2024, the agency has become more toxic and unhealthy. A huge reason why there is such turnover in public health currently is because of our Public Health Director.
60. I would recommend that [redacted] [redacted] learn what transparency means and, instead of being sneaky and trying to micro-manage departments, while being willing to cut positions at whatever cost, [redacted] discover that the actual value of the department [redacted] manages is the people. [redacted]'s a numbers person ([redacted] words, over and over again), which has created a workplace culture full of fear and the recognition that the staff she oversees mean absolutely nothing to [redacted], other than how they can generate revenue.

61. Job Security. Budgets continue to get tighter and tighter and FCPH seems to make the most concessions when it comes to cuts. Who's positions will be cut in 2027?

Please share any additional feedback:

62. Ever since our new Public Health Director ([redacted] [redacted]) was hired, things have gotten significantly worse. Many of my co-workers feel threatened and fear [redacted] will retaliate against them if they speak up. A common phrase around the agency is "stay off [redacted]'s radar so [redacted] will leave you alone". [redacted] is inconsistent and plays favorites amongst staff and departments within public health. [redacted] has damaged numerous internal and external relationships that will require mending once she leaves the City of Fargo.
63. Improved communication from leadership, including knowing when the director is out of the office and clarity about decision-making authority when the director is unavailable, would support smoother operations.
64. COF is a difficult place to work right now. Constantly in the news negatively. Not valued by residents of Fargo. The departments that are not in the news are negatively affected by those that are.
65. Recruitment and retention is becoming more and more difficult as the politics within the City of Fargo become evident in the media.
66. It is difficult to complete with this without showcasing what is specifically wrong. However, I feel as though the news has showcased a lot of the recent issues. There is SERIOUS issues with the leadership across the city but especially at FCPH. We can't expect transparency to the public without transparency within. Everyone's jobs seemingly are on the chopping block. Trim the fat, the leadership fat and save the budget a thousand times over. Leadership is SO mentally unwell, lazy, and disconnected from the people we are trying to serve. Public Health isn't meant to be a business, it's meant to be a safety net and help. We are losing sight of that every day there are comments in the halls about "those people." The silos are just as big as a year ago between departments, throughout the entire city.
67. There is a lot of unresolved issues in departments that I honestly do not think will ever be solved!
68. Fargo Cass Public Health as a whole is a toxic work environment. There are secrets, favoritism and microaggressions. I tend to stay in my own department and keep my head down. My department, supervisor and director are amazing to work with. The director at Fargo Cass has not been great to work with.
69. Cost of living increase should exceed the increase employees absorb from their benefit costs.
70. City Commission needs a different structure. Possibly more people, definately representation for more than downtown. Stronger leadership.
71. Invest in your citizens.

72. While I understand profits are important for the clinic to survive, it has unfortunately become a focus of the work we are doing. While our direct management team sees and understands that this is wrong, we can't seem to get it through to higher leadership. Money has begun to be prioritized over patient care. Decisions too often are driven by financial outcomes rather than what is in the best interest of the Fargo residents we serve. This is evident in staffing levels, resource allocation, and pressure placed on providers to see more clients in less time. When profits outweigh patient's needs, it defeats the purpose of why we exist as a public health department in the first place.

73. Quit promoting from within without a good reason: Management positions shouldn't be a reward for time worked here. Sick leave and vacation should be one bucket instead of two. Find another way to reward staff for being here longer than increased vacation time, people who have been here a long time have an unrealistic amount of hours to use during the year, their absence at work causes difficulty for others. Give individual employees credit for their work. Not the managers or the department the individual employees. Make working hard and being good at your job the goal that people are recognized for. Please stop the ridiculous ads for our benefit sign up it's such a waste of money - mailing to an employees house is stupid and a waste of funds. The videos are an insulting waste of time and money. We are fighting for our jobs and the HR and Comms team are playing at tthe Fargodome.

74. I am very disappointed in the city leadership as of late, especially the mayor and city administrator. The mayor chose to chastise [redacted] [redacted] on multiple media outlets regarding his decision to hold off on a press conference. While I understand that [redacted] [redacted]'s choice of words regarding his "day off" may not have been the best thing to say, the fact that his immediate superior (the mayor) took to the media to question his leadership is wrong and unprofessional. That is something to be discussed in private. If my supervisor did this to me, my trust would be forever broken. The resignation letter submitted by [redacted] [redacted] was hard to read. [redacted] sentiments regarding feeling unsupported by city administration are not unique to him. The fact that this type of disregard for repeated requests for assistance is allowed is poor for morale, as clearly stated in the resignation letter. What appears to be a lack of initiative to investigate or follow up easily translates into perceived apathy or even just laziness. That apathy becomes pervasive if repeated attempts to engage a city leader results in no response, no change, and no follow up. Eventually, you have a sector of your workforce that is beaten down, frustrated, and takes on that perceived apathy.

75. My work-life balance was greatly impacted by [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]. It was incredibly difficult to exhaust ALL of my sick leave and vacation leave while on a [redacted] [redacted] (aka FMLA) and come back with absolutely no leave time with young children who get sick from being in daycare. Please visit this policy and see if there is an opportunity to take maternity leave unpaid (without exhausting all of your accrued time off).

76. City lab should be a reference lab, testing complex tests like fertility tests, Covid, respiratory panels, STIs , CMP, BMP, CBC, and other wellness tests and other cancer and pathology tests.
77. none
78. City leaders, management, etc....treat your employees with respect. If leaders would just do that, employees would follow them anywhere. Treat them like crap, and you no longer have a team that wants to support the leaders. I cannot believe that city leaders and management haven't figured that out yet. Plus, it wouldnt hurt if our City Commissioners treated us like human beings as well.
79. I am glad to be part of the city employee.
80. Working for the City of Fargo is something to be proud of however there is a significant lack of proper leadership training and management which results in high turnover in some divisions.
81. The new Public Health Director has shown some effort in improving the department.
82. Unfortunately, anonymous surveys provide a platform for the "sour grapes" to complain because they are and never will be happy and are the primary reason for negative or toxic work environments.
83. While my immediate department leadership is good, I am not happy with the direction that Public Health in general is going with our new Director. I have not felt at all that she truly cares about the employees here. She is care mostly about "numbers" and dollars, and freely admits that.
84. Hostility, aggression, cyber bullying on social media, mis representation on radio shows has been allowed by elected city leaders who spout out statements as if gospel without any regard for fact checking. This needs to stop! Civil leadership at this level is needed for a unified Fargo, not the overly theatrical commission meetings that take place and represent our city on a national stage. We can do better, we should do better. Fargo deserves its elected officials to be held accountable to represent our home city more favorably. Nothing has harmed the downtown business more than untruths spoken publicly by [redacted] and [redacted] and the writings of the Fargo Forum.
85. There is a major disconnect between leadership and the rest of us. Management/ Leadership says they are listening to us, but what do they hear? What they want? The lack of communication is embarrassing. It's inconsistent and unclear. Nor do we even have the appropriate tools to have consistent communication. Morale is low and doesn't feel like anything is being done, except telling us staffing cuts won't be made (which doesn't reflect the work gossip going around). Workload expectations are UNREALISTIC. Decisions are made without considering how they affect day- to day work. Recognition is uneven. There is zero transparency, but that's all [redacted] says she is- transparent.
86. I love what I do and respect my coworkers. I have a good relationship with and respect my immediate supervisors and have received positive employee reviews with no concerns for all of my many years of employment. I come to work and do my job to the best of my ability.

Throughout my many years of employment at Public Health, the focus has been to provide preventative care primarily to the underserved in the community. In the last year, that focus has changed to "making a profit". "Underserved" and "profit" do not work well together. I do not feel valued or respected by our Director of Public Health and feel our immediate supervisors have been placed in a position to justify and buffer. I believe our negative work culture is a result of lack of trust. I am sad that my department has been turned upside down (in a negative way) by the hiring of one employee. The Director of Public Health emphasizes and has concerns for the mental health of our community but fails to be concerned with the mental health of her employees. Leadership classes teach us that budgets and schedules are managed, whereas people are led. Great leaders lead through example and listening....we are currently not seeing either at the top.

87. I do find joy in my work! But each day has been more and more challenging to continue to put the full effort.
88. When everyone is afraid of a manager firing them and you report to HR and they report back to tmanager then you get in trouble. how does that fix anything that is why no one trusts HR. If a lot of complaints come in something should be done. 4 people just quit in one department and nothing has been said about it. They communicate nothing. People promoted who don't know their jobs they have just been here a long time and know how to keep their mouths shut.
89. More opportunities for listening to members of the community to speak and voice concerns that arent just Anti-Harm reduction. Giving more of a voice to the people this city represents
90. I absolutely love the immediate department I work in. I feel very supported and heard by my coworkers and immediate supervisor. However, as part of the larger department I do not feel valued. I feel like I have to justify/defend my position and the work I do. I don't feel like our concerns are taken into account with larger decisions being made. Upper management does not seem to truly understand the work we do yet does not appear to take the initiative to learn about it. I feel as though we are always being asked to do more yet when additional support is needed, position aren't filled.
91. :)
92. A good leader looks like someone with strong integrity, effective communication skills, a clear vision, and the ability to inspire and empower their team. They are self-aware, accountable, and foster trust by showing empathy, courage, and resilience in the face of challenges. Key actions include focusing on team development, delegating tasks, being a positive role model, and making decisions that benefit the group. Key Qualities of a Good Leader Integrity and Ethics: A good leader acts with honesty and trustworthiness, doing the right thing even when it's difficult or unpopular. Communication: They are skilled communicators who listen actively, ensure everyone feels heard, and provide clear instructions and expectations. Vision and Strategic Thinking: Good leaders articulate a clear vision and encourage their teams to think strategically and innovate. Self-Awareness: They understand their own strengths and weaknesses and

prioritize their personal development. Empathy and Support: They show empathy by understanding their team's perspectives and support professional growth and well-being. Resilience and Courage: They remain calm and positive during challenges, displaying courage to speak truthfully and adapt to changing situations. Accountability: They take responsibility for their actions and outcomes, including mistakes. Empowerment and Trust: They trust their team members by delegating responsibilities, giving credit, and investing in their development. Decisiveness: They can make sound decisions that benefit the group. How Good Leaders Behave Lead by Example: They "walk the talk" by demonstrating the values and behaviors they expect from their teams. Develop Others: They actively focus on the professional development and skill-enhancement of their team members. Foster Collaboration: They create spaces for dialogue, promote teamwork, and value input from all stakeholders. Learn from Mistakes: They view failures as opportunities for growth and adapt their strategies accordingly. Motivate and Inspire: They motivate their teams by recognizing contributions and sharing their own passion.

93. The management and leadership team in the actual program I work in are extremely supportive and interested in the success of what we do. The Department head, who I see as the person who oversees the entire Department, does not seem to understand what the mission of what we do as an agency is. This person seems only concerned about numbers and money. There is no real recognition of individuals in the department. There also seems to be some favoritism. Certain programs receive less support and more scrutiny than others which feels unsettling and like some of our positions are not secure.

94. My department has complicated dynamics. I feel strongly about our work and mission and our division is passionate about these services. I know that leadership is working to improve management skills and create some structure. We are flexible with the city's needs but could use more support with supervision on new programs to set workable procedures early on.

95. Learning about pay from commissioners on social media is disheartening. It feels like my job isn't secure and I worry about having to find a new one at the drop of a dime due to budget cuts. Learning that PD is looking at spending $6,000/car to get vinyl wrapped based on designs at the school, is a waste of money that can go to other resources in public safety.

96. Since having a new public health director the health department is being very micromanaged and not being listened to. Our group has continually talked about what we have concerns about but there is a strong sense of control. Also, I understand about the budget cuts but that is all we hear these days but yet there is no transparency on the budget! I've never seen the budget since I've worked here. Where did all the money go? Why don't we have access to the budget? Who runs the health department budget? Why are the employees being penalized by working harder with less resources? Also, when did public health become a money maker, isn't it about prevention, education, protection and giving valuable resources? It's like saying schools are a business too. I understand clinics should be about making money but helping the vulnerable in the public is in my eyes not a money maker. It was always about the relationship that we had with our clients

and that feels different now because we are expected to do more visits with less time to do education, time to chart and collaborate with our colleagues and all the extra things like meetings. It's clinic driven in the homes and it's not what the our clients want and if this is public health we need listen to our clients and their needs. Also, everyone is scared of the public health director because we were told that she monitors us in the hallways and if we are working or not. This tells me there is no trust and to me that is not professional. We are a hard working, caring individuals that want what is best for our community. We want to be included in some decisions too instead of being told what to do all the time, the managers treat us it's like this is our first job and we have no clue. The way to build your team up is to be true leaders by encouraging autonomy, include is in the decision making process and lifting your employees up not the opposite.